



**Cross-Canada
marathon man**
Rick Casey will be
biking across
the country to raise
awareness about
mental illnesses.

NEWS 3

Spoke

Clean out those lockers!
Students are reminded to empty
their lockers before they leave.

NEWS 2

These students like it hot
Pre-service firefighters get practical
experience at fire department.

FEATURE 5

Monday, April 21, 2003

Conestoga College, Kitchener

34th Year — No. 14

Students claim sexual harassment *Unhappy with college response*

By AIMEE WILSON

Two victims of sexual harassment feel they have been pushed aside by the college.

Victoria and Jasmine (pseudonyms), said they have been sexually harassed since January.

"Since January there have been three girls that have been continually harassing us," they said, adding, "Almost every day they have offensive things to say to or about us," they said. The girls said they have been called "hoes," "whores," "bitches," and "sluts." Jasmine and Victoria also said rumours have been spread about them and the harassers have even tried to stop their friends from being around them.

Although Conestoga College has a human rights policy, Justin Falconer, Conestoga Students Incorporated vice-president of academics, feels there needs to be one outlined specifically for students. "There is no clearly written policy at the college for students who are adversely affected by sexual harassment."

"When we told them the situation, they told us that basically they don't deal with students, only faculty."

Victim of abuse

Falconer directed the girls to human resources to file a complaint on March 28. Unfortunately, the response they received wasn't what they were hoping for. "When we explained to them the situation, they told us that basically they don't deal with students, only faculty," they said. According to the victims, human resources told them to speak to a counsellor.

They went to a counsellor in Student Services and explained the situation step-by-step. According to the victims, the part-time counsellor who they spoke to was very concerned about the situation and they have no complaints with her. Together, they looked through the student handbook but after speaking with the counsellor they still felt like nothing was accomplished. According to Carol Gregory, a counsellor with Student Services, "A coun-

sellor acts as a resource," she said. In any type of case, if the student is willing to take the next step and involve a third party, they will be there to assist them. According to Victoria and Jasmine, the counsellor called back to check up on the situation.

Once more, the girls went back to human resources for a second attempt. This time, the girls spoke to Debra Croft, director, human resources. "We suspected that she had already made her decision about what she was and wasn't going to do about the problem. She looked as though she was distracted or had better things to deal with when we talked to her," they said. Croft said she gave the girls two suggestions on how to deal with the situation. The girls could either approach the harassers verbally or in writing and explain they were infringing upon the social standards of conduct. As of now, the girls have not yet met with the harassers and have yet to write a letter.

"We have not spoken to them one-on-one because we were never in a controllable or stable enough environment, although we have said to them indirectly to stop many times," they said. Croft also said she had given the girls a copy of the student procedures guide to refer to. She also suggested the girls see Catherine Koch, chair of school of business, to file a report. "We do take those allegations seriously," said Croft. The girls, however, said they never received the procedures guide and they were never told to talk to the chair.

In the Conestoga College human rights policy 2002, it outlines four steps in the resolution process. Stage 1 is informal and it states to take individual action. The policy states the victim should ask the person causing the problem to stop. Stage 2, also informal, involves assistance. This is if the victim is unable to confront the harasser. Stage 3 is a formal written complaint to the policy coordinator. This occurs if the problem has not been resolved after Stage 2. Once the formal complaint has been made, the victim should know within five days if the complaint will be pursued under the policy. If the complaint is followed, the harasser will be given a copy of the complaint, as well as being informed of their rights and

responsibilities, and asked to respond. The victim then gets to receive a copy of the response. From here, the co-ordinator is supposed to meet with both parties and reach a resolution.

Stage 4 only occurs if there is no resolution after Stage 3. Other parties would get involved to investigate the circumstances. An investigation report is written which allows the victim and harasser to comment. Within 10 days of meeting with both parties, a final decision is made by a vice-president.

"I wouldn't want the students to think they weren't heard or it wasn't important, because it is."

*Debra Croft,
director, human resources*

Croft said she felt the matter didn't fall under the protection of the human rights policy. According to Croft, these areas include matters involving race, religion and gender, to name a few. Croft said she only deals with sexually harassment cases based on those grounds. "It was still an issue I felt it was important to be dealt with," said Croft, adding, "I wouldn't want the students to think they weren't heard or it wasn't important, because it is."

Croft said she had gotten the impression the girls had left human resources with the intention of approaching the harassers.

Gregory also reinforced that the students were either to meet with the harassers one-on-one, or involve a third party.

It is now almost a month later and the girls still feel unhappy with the response. Both girls have been affected deeply by this. "One of the main ways it has impacted us is that we have begun to hate the fact that we have to come to school and pay to be harassed by people who don't know a single thing about us," they said, adding, "It makes us confused and wonder why those girls chose to focus on us."

The students say if the sexual harassment persists, they plan on involving a third party. Overall, their initial impression on how they were dealt with was unsatisfying.



(Photo by Aimee Wilson)

Conestoga Students Incorporated has decided that they will not donate \$15,000 to Spoke and \$10,000 to CJIQ next year.

CSI alters funding of Spoke, CJIQ

By AIMEE WILSON

Conestoga Students Incorporated (CSI) has decided not to donate money to Spoke or CJIQ for the 2003-2004 school year.

"We want to go from a donation relationship to a pay-per-use relationship," said Justin Falconer, vice-president of academics.

On March 28, the CSI executives voted unanimously that they would not donate \$15,000 to Spoke and \$10,000 to CJIQ as they have done in the past. "It's not like we're taking it away, it's just coming in a different way," said Falconer, adding, "It's coming as a customer, not a donor."

According to Falconer, CSI doesn't want to be seen as controlling what Spoke puts in its articles. Falconer said as a donor, there is always the chance of bias entering stories or swaying the opinion of writers. "You can't put 20-year-old students in charge of thousands of dollars and expect they don't want to influence how their personal reputation is portrayed," said

Falconer. Therefore, by switching to a customer, any potential bias is removed.

Currently, the donation is made in exchange for the insertion of advertising in the paper. However, if ads are not booked, the money is still guaranteed.

CSI has been given four weeks to make a final decision whether or not to provide funding for Spoke next year.

"We have concerns," said Christina Jonas, co-ordinator of the journalism-print and broadcast program, adding, "We feel that the CSI's funding of Spoke is money well-spent. Spoke has the potential to reach every college student at all five campuses providing a great forum for a CSI message." Jonas also said that this isn't the first time they have dealt with this issue.

Falconer agrees the paper is important for the school. "It provides the truth to students," he said, adding, "It's a very important service. I just want to encourage a customer relationship."

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(Photo by Aimee Wilson)

Brian Welsh, a transportation enforcement officer, demonstrates the new wireless computer system in Ministry of Transportation vehicles to students in LASA and police foundations April 10.

New technology a plus

Computers provide driver information

By AIMEE WILSON

Students may have noticed several Ministry of Transportation and Vehicle Emissions Enforcement Unit vehicles parked outside the college on April 10.

"This technology will make a difference."

*Harry Alkema,
transportation enforcement
officer*

The two ministries were giving presentations to graduating students of the police foundations and LASA programs on the new state-of-the-art equipment newly installed in the vehicles.

"This new technology will make a difference," said Harry Alkema, transportation enforcement officer and enforcement business analyst. The project is called The Road Users Safety System Renewal.

The new technology installed in

the vehicles is mounted in between the driver and passenger seats. It consists of a wireless laptop computer and printer, which allow the transportation officer to access any information regarding the driver when they make a stop.

The new technology enables the transportation officer to bring up information on the driver's licence plates, the driver's profile, any outstanding offences, etc.

"Everyone has a record," said Alkema. If anything is out of the ordinary, the computer will bring it up immediately. This ensures the officer's safety and to make sure they are identifying the correct people.

For example, if the driver presents a false identification, the computer will alert the officer.

According to Alkema, other ministries and police officers have been using this same kind of wireless technology for about five years.

The wireless system has only been developed for the Ministry of

Transportation and the Vehicle Emissions Enforcement Unit in the last three years.

In the near future, photos will also be accessible on the computers.

"Ontario has the safest roads in North America."

Alkema

According to Alkema, it costs \$10,000 to install one wireless system in a vehicle. The equipment is both waterproof and shockproof.

"Ontario has the safest roads in North America," said Alkema.

This is mainly because Ontario enforces strict road regulations and laws. "When you're on the road, you want to know you're safe," he said.

In September, all ministry of transportation vehicles will have the new technology installed in them.

Clean out your lockers

By JEFF MORLEY

As school ends, Conestoga students break for the summer to work or travel and have fun. However, many students don't clean out their lockers before they leave.

Last year Conestoga staff spent a full week cutting locks and cleaning out lockers. Head of Security Services, Al Hunter, said that 479 lockers were cleaned out and 135 had personal property in them. Not only is it a full week of work for staff, students can also lose a significant amount of property.

Security Services has removed textbooks, projects, clothing, tools and sometimes moldy lunch bags. "We find a lot of books that are still in the wrapper and tool kits that have not even been opened." Hunter also said that a year and a half ago staff opened a locker and took out an almost new camcorder.

The retired police officer says that his staff tries to identify the property and determine who owns it. Staff then tries to track the students down, but many of them have already moved or gone back home. Security Services will hold onto property for as long as possible, however space is limited.

For the property that is unclaimed, much of it is donated to charities. Clothing goes to the Salvation Army, while textbooks go to the CSI to sell again. Things, such as calculators, are given to Student Services to help out those



(Photo by Jeff Morley)

Al Hunter, head of security services, wants to remind students to clean out their lockers before they leave for the summer.

students that are disadvantaged.

Hunter says that some students think the college is static throughout the summer. However, the school is host to many summer programs and is quite busy. As a result, locker space has to be made and returning students are reassigned new lockers in the fall semester.

Hunter said that a reminder notice will be on the overhead for the week of exams in the hopes that more students will clean out their lockers.

"We hate to see students lose their property."

Meetings to be held to address funding issues

Continued from Page 1

Further meetings between Spoke and CSI are in the works to clear up any misunderstandings and concerns both parties have.

As for CJIQ, an agreement was made between the radio station and CSI four years ago when the radio station was in the initial stages of production. According to Paul Osborne, manager of CJIQ, the agreement has expired and this decision didn't come as a surprise. "We've always had a working relationship with them (CSI)," said Osborne.

According to Falconer, when the station was in the production stage, the CSI president at that time agreed to donate \$40,000 to get the station up-and-running. At the time, CSI didn't have the money for a lump sum, therefore an agreement was made that \$10,000 would be given over four years.

The \$10,000 each year was used to cover start-up costs, which consisted of equipment, the building of the studio and rental space. CJIQ rents space for its transmitter antennae on the Global TV tower in Paris, Ont. CJIQ has a partnership with the CBC and the money is also used to cover any annual maintenance CBC does for the col-

lege's radio station.

Falconer said CSI will buy air time on CJIQ for advertisements. CSI also plans to install a DJ booth inside the Sanctuary over the summer. If plans go through, Falconer said the booth will be used in collaboration with CJIQ.

Osborne said they will cover the money lost by selling commercials. "We're getting more and more well-known," he said. Since the station is for educational purposes, CJIQ cannot market through traditional ways due to CRTC regulations.

"We're always open to new and exciting projects that they (CSI) have."

*Paul Osborne,
CJIQ manager*

Osborne said they will continue to encourage CSI to use air-time. "We're always open to new and exciting projects that they (CSI) have," he said.

According to Falconer, the debate whether or not to donate to Spoke and CJIQ lasted for six weeks.

The money for both donations came from the student fee budget.

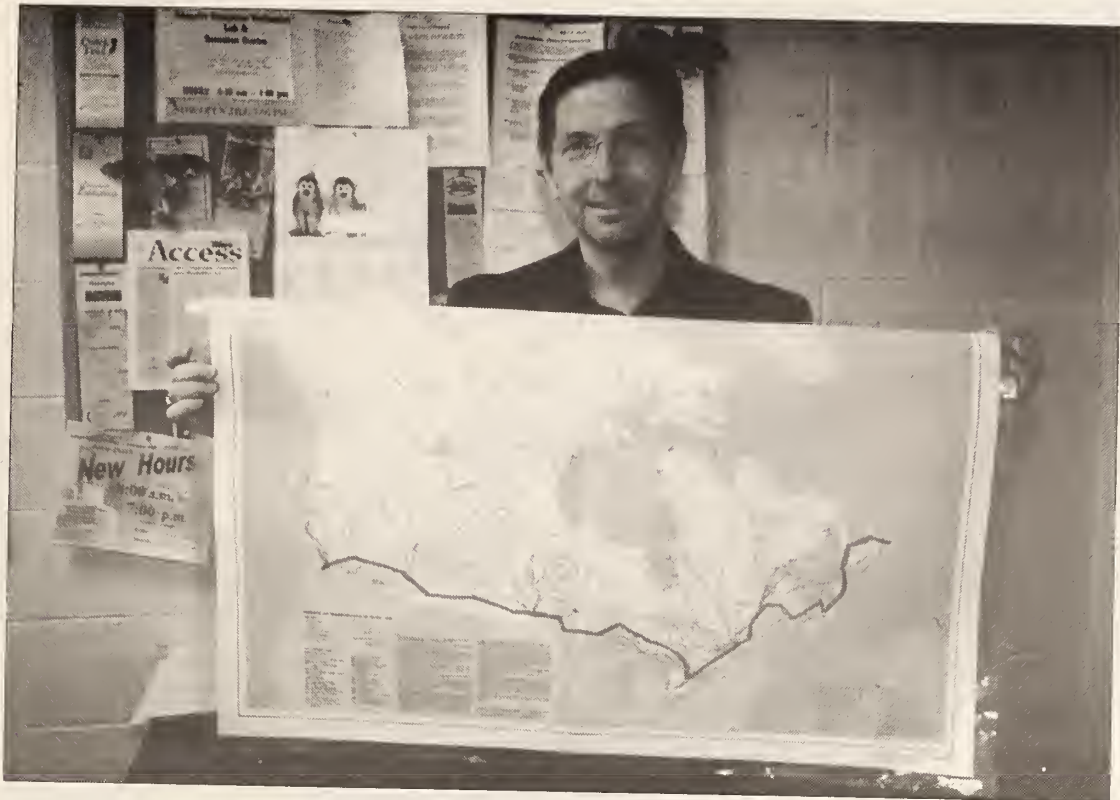
Career Services - Room 2B04

Upcoming Events:

Attention all Woodworking Engineering Technology 3rd year students and graduates. The Production Manager of Shawwood Industries located in Nova Scotia, will be on campus Thursday, April 24, 2003. Shawwood Industries is a manufacturer of solid pine RTA furniture and they are currently the exclusive supplier to IKEA in North America. If you are interested in obtaining further information on this company, please attend the Information Session scheduled at 12 noon in Rooms W9 and W10 at the Woodworking Centre. Please bring your resume!

Looking for a Summer, Part-time or Full-Time Job? - Remember to check out workopolisCampus.com - the Web site employers are posting job opportunities on - just for you!

To obtain further information or the "Access Code" for this Web site, please come into our office.



(Photo by Diana O'Neill)

Rick Casey, a disability services counsellor at the college, is planning on biking across Canada to raise awareness of the support needed by people with mental illnesses.

Journey of awareness

College counsellor to ride across Canada

By DIANA O'NEILL

In a mere 120 days, Rick Casey plans on riding a bike across Canada. Accompanying him on the long journey will be his daughter's stuffed animal, Penguin.

Casey, a Conestoga College disability services counsellor, has decided to cycle across Canada to increase awareness of the support needed by people with mental illnesses. The 50-year-old will begin his journey in Victoria, B.C., on May 4 to coincide with the start of Canada's mental health week. The Paris, Ont. native aims on traveling an average of 80 kilometres a day as part his incredible 8,000-kilometre trip across the country.

"My journey is a personal one, due in part to find sense in the untimely death of my daughter," he said.

"My journey is a personal one, due in part to find sense in the untimely death of my daughter."

Rick Casey,
disability services counsellor

In September 2001, 19-year-old Kyla Anne Casey died from a pulmonary embolism while she was a patient in a mental health unit. Shortly after her 16th birthday Kyla had been diagnosed with bipolar/schizo-affective disorder. It's a form of mental illness that includes severe mood swings and some of the psychotic symptoms of schizophrenia.

Casey and his family encountered many bumps in the road of the mental health care system. When Kyla was first diagnosed, her family was unable to find support in their community to assist in giving her accessible treatment. This became further complicated by Kyla's age at the time. Casey said

that the family was initially left out of the decision making because she was technically considered an adult.

"The end result was we had to wait until she was so very ill that we were appointed her decision makers. Then through our own resources, we acted as case managers to find her the appropriate support," Casey said, adding, "We encountered barriers in the system that further delayed getting Kyla help."

As Casey and his family were led through the complex health-care system, it only became more evident how vital it was to receive professional help at the earliest stages of diagnosis in order to stabilize the disorder and attempt to recover from it.

"All through this part of the ordeal, we were running into political boundary issues between ministries and the cutbacks in the health-care system were so evident," he said, adding, "This appeared to be worse in the mental health field due to its low priority in terms of funding by both the provincial and federal governments."

Casey's self-described journey of "hope and healing" shows his conviction in finding meaning in his family's tragic loss. With the endorsement of the Canadian Mental Health Association (CHMA), Casey is ready to begin his trek across the country. He will be speaking out at various CHMA branches along his route.

"If we do not raise the awareness for the need of community support," he said, adding, "we will never develop services to support those who are ill and deserve access to the best treatment this country can provide."

Casey will be relying primarily on his own resources, which include cost for his equipment, airfare and food. "My hope is to have friendly faces every 80 kilometres

or so, that will listen to my story — not to mention offer me encouragement."

Barb Kraller, Student Services counsellor, thinks it's extremely important that Casey embarks on this healing journey. "I have so much respect for the fact that he is channeling all these different emotions, such as anger and loss, towards something good," she said, adding, "So maybe a family won't find themselves in the same posi-

"My hope is to have friendly faces every 80 kilometres or so ..."

Casey

tion."

With the help of Student Services, Kraller organized an open house for Casey's cycle across Canada on April 17 at the college. She expressed how vital it is that the college show support for what Casey is attempting. "He's a dad, a social worker and an advocate for a personal dream that has turned into a real awareness campaign."

Casey has a positive vision of why this will be a journey of hope and healing.

"One reason is to raise awareness that those persons with a mental illness need and deserve better treatment and to raise funding for community supports and services higher on the political agenda."

"If in some small way this ride will serve to reduce the stigma often associated with those with a mental illness and cause people to reflect on how we treat those who are different, then I will be happy. If it creates a mechanism for increased government funding, I would be ecstatic. Who knows where this will lead," he said, adding, "The selfish part for me is that I will have had time to grieve the loss of a daughter who deserved better than she received."

Wall retires after almost 28 years here

By NICK HORTON

At a time when the world is full of uncertainty and problems are arising faster than solutions, it's nice to have someone around to put you at ease, even if it does mean a practical joke or two.

Liberal studies geography professor Bob Wall is one of these people. Unfortunately, students and faculty will see his face less come September. After working at Conestoga College for almost 28 years, Wall is retiring.

Many will miss Wall's commitment to the college and his students, along with his honesty and unique sense of humor.

"Bob has a real strong commitment to what he calls an open door policy. He wants to make sure students know their professor is approachable, he will be dearly missed," said liberal studies professor Anne Charles.

Wall's contributions to Conestoga include more than just teaching. He just finished his term as chief steward of the union and has previously been on the governing Board of Directors at the college.

Wall is known for being ready for anything and preparing things ahead of time.

"Bob is the type of guy that if he

were coming back next year, he would be working on his stuff for December because his stuff for September is already done. He has great integrity and a desire to get better," said liberal studies professor Dwayne Shadd. Shadd went on to say he sees Wall not only as a friend, but also as a role model.

Wall's practical jokes and sense of humour have made life for the people around him much less stressful.

"We spend as much time laughing in this office as anything else," said sociology professor Geoff Johnstone.

"He is rude, he is obnoxious, he is loud and that's why I love him," he said.

Shadd shares a similar opinion. "You can tease him, you can ride him, and he'll always come back at you. He has a quick tongue," he said.

Although Wall is retiring, there is still hope he will come back to teach part-time.

"I think he would like to, hopefully he does," said Johnstone.

"All I know is, whatever he does decide to do, you won't be able to find him. He is going to be in over his head and then start digging his way up and once he does that, look out," said Shadd.



(Photo by Nick Horton)

Social Services co-ordinator Madeleine Poynter shows off her Queen's Golden Jubilee Medal awarded for volunteer work.

Poynter awarded medal

By NICK HORTON

Conestoga College being named the No. 1 college in Ontario for five straight years isn't a fluke, nor is a faculty member receiving a Queen's Golden Jubilee Medal.

On March 28, Madeleine Poynter, co-ordinator of social services at Conestoga College, received the award, which is in commemoration of Queen Elizabeth II's Golden Jubilee. It was created to mark the 50th anniversary of the accession of Her Majesty to the throne on Feb. 6, 1952. It is awarded to those who have made a significant contribution to Canada, their community, or to their fellow Canadians.

Poynter was awarded the medal for her significant contribution to

community volunteering. She has been on the board of directors of the YWCA of Canada for four years and volunteers on the national and local level.

She received the award in the mail March 28, at first not thinking much of the envelope.

"I didn't recognize the envelope, so I didn't open it for a day." Soon after, Poynter realized the envelope contained more than she first believed. "I thought I had better see what is in this package and was very surprised. I had not known I had been nominated."

During the fall semester of 2001, Poynter took a sabbatical from her job at the college and volunteered for the YWCA of Kitchener-Waterloo as the staff co-ordinator of their Week Without Violence campaign.

Ban cosmetic pesticides

Pesticides are dangerous chemicals that harm our health and environment. Many municipalities across Canada have recognized this fact, and started to take action against pesticide use. The federal government updated the Pest Control Products Act, taking children into consideration and tightening up the registration process for pesticides. However, the act does not go far enough. Cosmetic pesticides need to be banned in Canada.

The debate over pesticides heated up in Toronto last week when its board of health proposed a bylaw to ban pesticide use on lawns by June 2005.

Toronto is not the only city to move in this health-conscious direction. A May 2002 Natural Life Magazine article states almost 40 municipalities across Canada have banned cosmetic pesticides. The municipality of Halifax/Dartmouth in Nova Scotia passed a pesticide ban bylaw in 2000. Hudson, Que. was the first Canadian town to prohibit pesticide use, when it passed a bylaw banning residents from using chemicals for esthetic purposes in 1991. Now it seems that the entire province has followed suit, since Quebec announced last year that it would ban chemical pesticides in all day-care facilities, schools and public property by 2003. Pesticides will not be permitted on private green space by 2005.

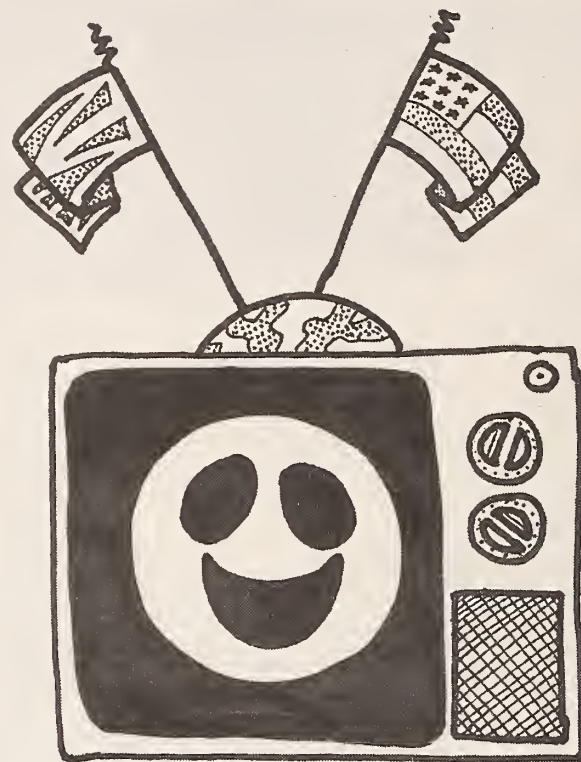
These governments did not arbitrarily decide to ban pesticides, they had good reason. Pesticides cause health problems for our citizens and wildlife. For example, according to the Sierra Club of Canada's Web site, www.sierraclub.ca, methyl bromide was responsible for many deaths due to workplace exposure. This chemical also caused five to 10 per cent of the world's ozone depletion.

Fortunately, Canada phased this toxin out by 2001. The Sierra Club's site also said breast cancer, lymphoma and childhood leukemia and brain cancer have been linked to pesticide use. According to a study from the National Cancer Institute in the U.S., when pesticides are used in the home and garden, children are up to six times more likely to get childhood leukemia.

Even a government committee found sound evidence to outlaw cosmetic pesticides. A July 2000 article from Natural Life said a federal Commons Standing Committee on Environmental and Sustainable Development recommended new cosmetic pesticides should not be registered, while current ones should be de-registered.

So, when the government updated the pesticide act last March, why didn't they take the committee's recommendation to ban cosmetic pesticides? In a Natural Life article from May 2002, the environment minister stated that banning pesticides is a provincial and municipal power, not a federal one. That's a cop-out. If the government had the authority to ban methyl bromide, then it can ban other pesticides.

If almost 40 towns and cities across the country, including Halifax and the entire province of Quebec, have banned cosmetic pesticide use, then the federal government can take more action. They need to ban individual chemicals and place more restrictions on the registration process for pesticides. With cancers like lymphoma, breast cancer and childhood leukemia linked to pesticides, the government should not allow cosmetic pesticide use to continue. Meanwhile, cities like Halifax, Hudson and Toronto should be commended for their efforts to put the health of residents and the environment ahead of the pleasant appearance of weed-free lawns and gardens. Other Canadian municipalities should follow their example.



CNN's 24-HOUR NEWS COVERAGE

It's time for tolerance

The recent severe acute respiratory syndrome (SARS) outbreak is alarming.

But what I find more appalling is the attitude shift towards Asian-Canadians across the region.

The flu-like illness, which is believed to have originated in China, is now being linked to Chinese people as a group. Paranoia, fear and ignorance are wrapped in a harmful little package and being directed towards this demographic. What people do not comprehend, is that SARS could have originated anywhere.

It's scary and unfortunate that the Greater Toronto Area is facing the fast-spreading infectious disease. Now, more than ever, this is not the time to label and generalize. What's needed is some tolerance and understanding.

Just the other day I overheard people saying that SARS is the new "Chinese disease." They were so amused by the clever little ring it had. Wow, they rhymed – how brilliant! It reminded me of the onset of AIDS when it was labeled



Diana O'Neill

Opinion

as the gay plague, after it was discovered that the second sufferer of the disease was a homosexual French-Canadian.

The SARS outbreak is not a laughing matter. Not only are people dying from this illness, but Chinese-owned businesses, especially in the Scarborough area, have been facing the fallout as well. An April 4 issue of the Toronto Star reported that in less than two weeks, some restaurant and store owners have reported staggering drops in sales that range from 30 to 70 per cent. This is a sign that people are letting fear take over and dictate their actions. The article also stated the Chinese Council of Canadians has received several messages that single out that community as being

responsible for spreading the disease. Not only that, but the complete lack of knowledge and information is also contributing to this rise in ignorance.

The prime minister took it upon himself to show people that it's OK to go about their daily lives, but still remain cautious. On April 10, Jean Chretien lent his support towards businesses that are being hit due to the SARS scare. He attempted to expel the misinformed beliefs by eating lunch at a restaurant in the heart of Toronto's Chinatown.

Other members of Parliament have done the same and showed their support for the Chinese business community.

Health officials have been stressing that SARS is not an illness of ethnicity, but it seems that people just aren't listening. Chinese-Canadian groups remain the target of racism and stereotyping.

We all need to remain calm and tolerant while this unfamiliar illness rears its ugly head. What we do not need is race bashing and ignorance.



Letters are welcome

Spoke welcomes letters to the editor. Letters should be signed and include the name and telephone number of the writer. Writers will be contacted for verification.

No unsigned letters will be published.

Letters should be no longer than 500 words.

Spoke reserves the right to edit any letter for publication.

Address correspondence to:

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Spoke

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Spoke is mainly funded from September to May by a payment from Conestoga Students Inc. (CSI) in exchange for the insertion of advertising in the paper. The views and opinions expressed in this newspaper do not necessarily reflect the views of Conestoga College or the CSI. Advertisers in Spoke are not endorsed by the CSI unless their advertisements contain the CSI logo. Spoke shall not be liable for any damages arising out of errors in advertising beyond the amount paid for the space. Letters to the editor are subject to acceptance or rejection and should be clearly written or typed; a MS Word file would be helpful. Letters must not contain any libellous statements.



Pre-service firefighters inch towards a flammable liquid fire and, using water application techniques they learned, put it out. Students are strategically placed along the fire hose to stabilize the student at the spout, who could be overwhelmed by the water pressure. Another platoon, as they call themselves, also sprays water to keep the tank cool on the other side. This prevents the tank from exploding.



Fiery fun

Students experience real-life firefighting

By CARLA SANDHAM

Pre-service firefighting students tested their knowledge during hands-on training exercises at the Cambridge fire department on April 11.

The program co-ordinator, Doug Richard, said practical experience is a big component of the course.

"Feeling what it's like first-hand is as much a part of learning as hearing how to do it in lectures," said Richard, who was a Waterloo firefighter for 24 years before coming to teach at Conestoga.

Every Friday for the past six weeks, 36 pre-service firefighters geared up for a variety of fire ground operations training scenarios.

During the labs, which were held either on campus or at the fire grounds, students learned about confined spaces, search and rescue operations and suppression all by doing. They also experienced high-pressure water working with fire hoses and got up close and personal with real fires.

"When you smell the smoke and see the fire it's a great feeling," said Marty Skowron, a pre-service firefighter. "There is nothing better than learning how to do it in the classroom and then having the chance to actually do it."

Mary-Lynn Bross, who is one of three women in the program, agreed and said the practical training is the best part of the course.

"After spending four hours learning theory, everyone looks forward to doing something different on Fridays," she said.

Richard said these training exercises keep students active.

The class is broken down into platoons and each team participates in one of the three to four stations before rotating to another scenario.

On previous visits to the Cambridge fire grounds, students were climbing ladders and hanging from ropes. Richard said students learned to properly anchor a rope and experience what it is like for a victim to climb out of a burning building and come down on a rope.

Capt. Grant Dix, of the Brantford fire department, assists with training at the fire grounds and said practical experience is important for the students.

"This type of training allows us to stop and talk to the students so they can learn from their mistakes," he said.

And Cambridge Lieut. training officer Marty Mills added you can't beat hands-on training.

"When they can see how it's done in a controlled environment we hope all the practice will kick in when the bell rings," said Mills.

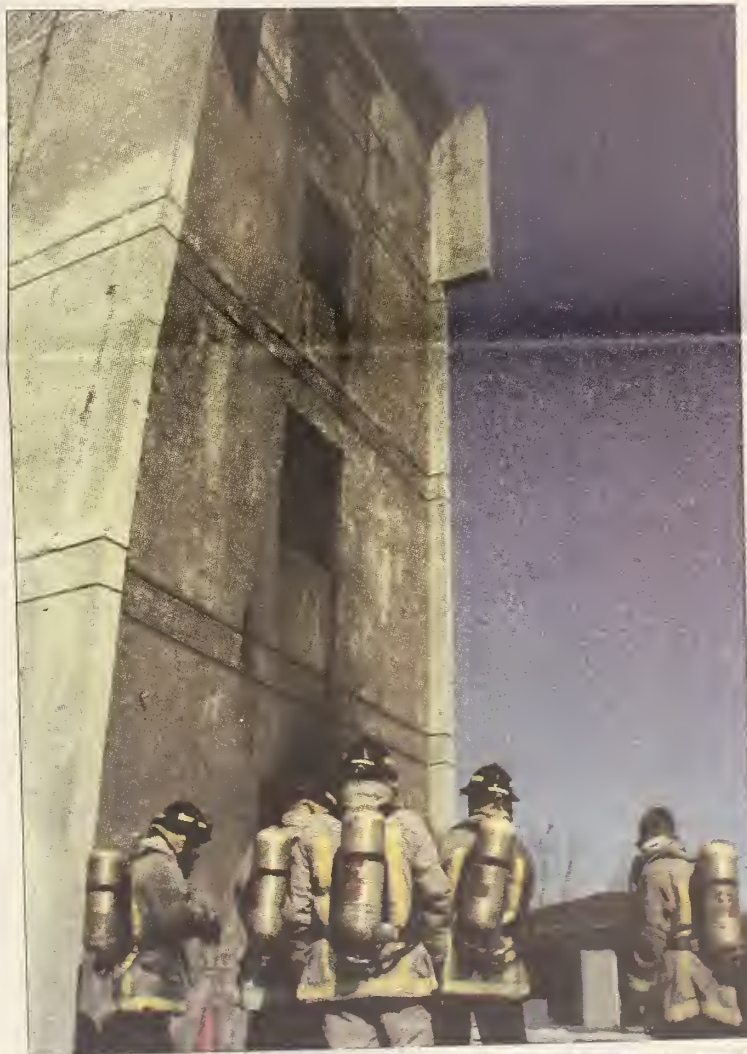
On April 11, students were exposed to a flammable liquid fire. They also got a taste of a small fire in a cement building at the fire grounds. By combining what they learned in class and about these types of fires and water application techniques, students extinguished the fires in a realistic situation.

Dix said the scenarios are close to the real thing, but are staged for protection. He added nothing would ever be the same as the real thing.

It's not the real thing, but students still benefit from the experience. Richard said the exercises help students acquire the skill set to become firefighters.

Mills added even though the students need a lot more training, what they are doing now will reduce the training fire departments will have to give them once they're hired.

And Bross said, "Friday's lab made up my mind this is what I want to do."



In photo at left, pre-service firefighting students gather at the fire house at the Cambridge fire department. At this station teams prepare to climb up a flight of stairs with a line of fire hose to practise an indirect fire attack, using a fog-steam technique. In above photo, another team of students handles 900 kilopascals of water pressure.

In photo below, students grip the hose tightly. They are spraying water onto a tank, which contains flammable liquid, to keep it cool.

Photos by
Carla Sandham



All aboard!

Train engineer finds new life with short-line railway

By JASON NOE

For 29 years, he's been living a childhood fantasy and has no intention of quitting anytime soon.

Goderich-Exeter Railway engineer Dennis Fleet began working for the railway in 1974, and still enjoys sitting behind the controls of a locomotive.

Over the past four years, Fleet has been working for the Goderich-Exeter Railway based in Kitchener. The short-line railway is owned by the parent company, RailAmerica, located in Boca Raton, Fla. RailAmerica owns 46 short-line and regional railway companies including lines in Chile and Australia.

In November 1998, the Goderich-Exeter Railway took over operations of the Canadian National Railway line from Georgetown to London, Ont. The line passes through Kitchener, and is where Fleet was working for CN Rail at the time. On the last day before the takeover of the line, Fleet retired from CN and went to work for the Goderich-Exeter Railway. He also began another chapter in his career, one that already stretched more than three decades.

"It was my lifelong dream to be an engineer," said Fleet as he operated a Goderich-Exeter Railway locomotive in Kitchener. "I started off going on a steam engine in 1953, when I was five years old, running from London to Sarnia and back."

His father had friends who worked on CN Rail at the time, and they managed to give Fleet his first ride on the steam train. From that day forward, Fleet knew he wanted to be like the men he saw working on that locomotive.

In 1974, Fleet received an application for CN Rail from a friend, and filled it out. It landed him an interview in London, and he was hired immediately as a brakeman because CN Rail was actively hiring.

Fleet worked his first day for the railway in Kitchener, and he said it was confusing.

"I enjoyed it, but it was different. You didn't know what you were doing or where you were going," he said. "You had five trial trips when I first started, and my first job was switching the Budd plant in Kitchener."

From there, Fleet managed to work on every type of train imaginable on CN Rail across southern Ontario. He was a brakeman on freight trains, passenger trains, local trains, and work trains.

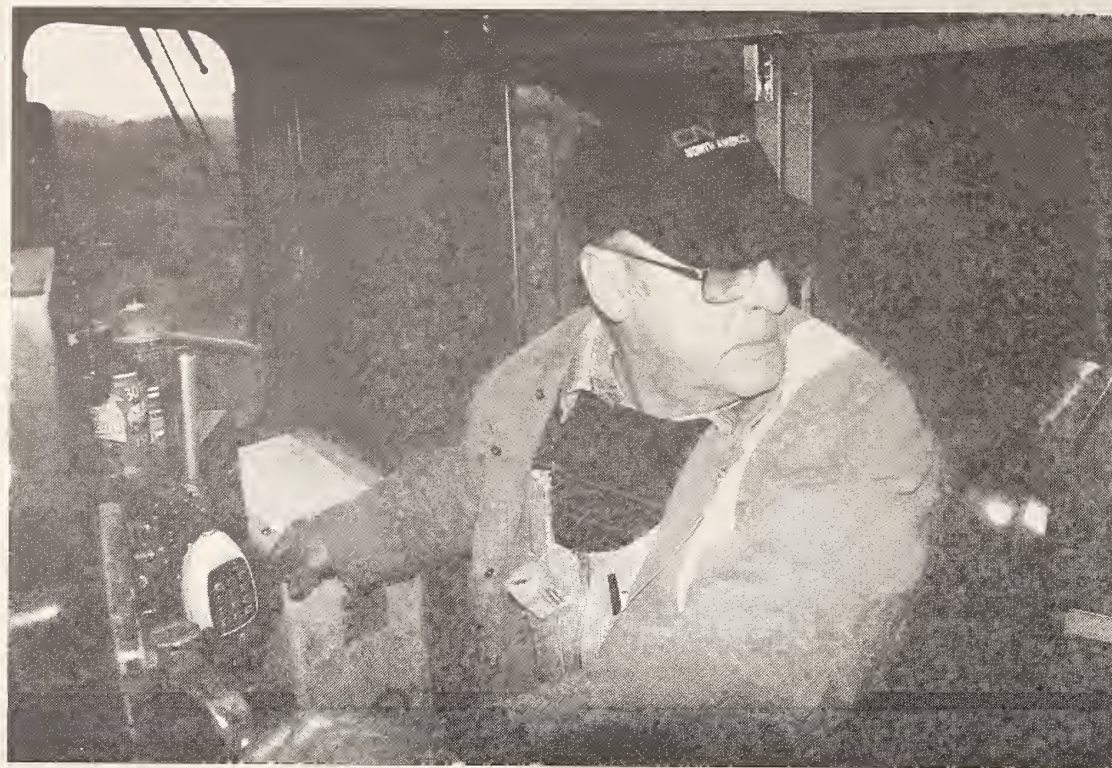
"When there wasn't enough work in Kitchener, I ended up going to Oshawa and worked there for three months," he said. "Down there we switched tire factories, General Motors, and several other plants."

In 1980 Fleet had the opportunity to become an engineer, after working the last six years as a brakeman and conductor. He was required to attend a two-month training program at the CN Rail training centre in Gimli, Man.

"It was all classroom work for two months, then it was six months on-the-job training, running with engineers," he said.

The engineer has the benefit of operating a train from the locomotive cab, which Fleet feels is better than being a brakeman. The brakeman has to do all the required work outside, and that can be a dangerous job if you are not safety conscious.

After six years of working as a



(Photo by Jason Noe)

Goderich-Exeter Railway engineer Dennis Fleet began working for railways in 1974.

brakeman, Fleet was thrilled to finally become an engineer for CN Rail.

"It's a lot warmer, a lot dryer, a lot safer, and you're not amongst the moving equipment, because I had a couple incidents where I was almost killed," said Fleet. "Working on the ground I was almost crushed between cars that I was switching. One of the scariest things I've ever seen was one of the guys almost getting chopped in two between the couplers of the cars. He just barely missed (being killed)."

But train crews also face another obstacle when they are operating trains - the general public. Fleet believes that most people do not respect trains. He sees this on a daily basis, as motorists try to beat trains to crossings before they arrive. It is a nerve-racking experience for train crews when they collide with vehicles or people at railway crossings. In most cases, the conductor and engineer are the first ones on the scene of a collision.

They are the first people to investigate if those hit by the train are still alive or injured. Fleet has been in several of these serious accidents, and they are always traumatic.

"The worst one I ever had was up around Chesley, Ont., when we hit a car broadside and killed both people in it," he said. "There was a little girl in the backseat, she bounced out and ended up in the field. All she got was cuts and bruises."

A locomotive engineer also has to worry about operating the engines and cars he is controlling, and this can often be stressful if the train is heavy. Fleet has operated a variety of trains over his career, but sometimes he gets one that is difficult to handle.

"It's hard to control a big train. It takes a long time to get them started, and a long time to get them stopped," he said. "You have to start planning three miles in advance when you want to stop the train. Most trains are good handling trains, but you get the odd train that doesn't respond to what you want it to do. They're harder to control, harder to brake, and harder to get going."

In 1998, Fleet retired from CN Rail after almost 25 years of service in the company. He joined the Goderich-Exeter Railway because he still loved working on trains, and the short-line company would be operating on most of the same lines Fleet worked on with CN Rail.

Over the last eight years, CN Rail sold several of its smaller railway lines to short-line companies across Canada. Short-lines can provide better customer service to shippers, and are aggressive when attracting new business. CN Rail's counterpart, Canadian Pacific, also managed to sell off several of its smaller lines to short-line operators during this period. Ironically, most of these smaller railways employed many ex-CN Rail and CP Rail employees who had either retired or quit the national railways. Fleet enjoys working for a short-line company, and feels there are more

advantages than disadvantages.

"A short-line treats you better, they treat you like a person," he said. "A big company treats you as a number, and they don't give the help they give you on the small lines. Everybody helps each other, where at CN you got the big bosses up top telling you what to do, and they don't help you at all."

When Fleet began working for the railway there were five men assigned to operate a train. They included an engineer, a fireman (acts as a brakeman), a conductor, and two brakemen. But now the short-lines operate with just two crew members, an engineer and conductor.

"The conductor has to do all the ground work by himself and the paperwork," said Fleet. "Of course, back in the old days a conductor just ran the train and did all the paperwork. The brakeman did all the work."

From 1998 to 2001, Fleet managed to work for several other short-line companies for a brief period, as well as the Goderich-Exeter Railway.

In January 2001, Fleet retired from working on the railway to build his dream home near a beach in Ontario. But after a year of being away from the locomotive throttles, he decided to return to operating locomotives on the Goderich-Exeter Railway.

"I missed it, and that's one of the reasons I came back because I enjoy what I do," he said.

Fleet currently works five days a week on train 433, which runs from Kitchener to London and back. It delivers automotive frame cars to CN Rail in London.

He plans on working for the next few years with the Goderich-Exeter Railway before he retires again, after he turns 60. Or he may stay around a little longer on the railway for the pure love of it.

"You have to be born into it. I was born into it," said Fleet. "I'm a natural for an engineer."



(Photos by Jason Noe)

Engineer Dennis Fleet said it was a lifelong dream to be an engineer. He loves it so much he can't give it up. He retired in 1998, but has since gone back to work.



(Photo by Brandi Stevenson)

Food Services director John Kast threw the advertising program a pizza party on April 9 as thanks for designing new logos for Dooners and Coz-E-Corner. Erin Wakutz's design won for Dooners, and Misty Watters' creation was selected for Coz-E-Corner.

Cafeterias get new logos

By BRANDI STEVENSON

Thanks to the advertising program, Dooners and Coz-E Corner cafeterias are getting new looks.

Each student in the program designed a logo for the cafeterias as part of a contest. Misty Watters' creation won for Coz-E corner, and Erin Wakutz had the winning concept for Dooners.

The contest was initiated by food services director John Kast. After the E-wing cafe was named Coz-E Corner, Kast wanted a sign, or logo, to identify the new space. Kast also wanted to replace the old Dooners sign. He said he thought getting a student to design it would get them involved in the school.

So, he brought his idea to program co-ordinator Deborah Reyner and creative teacher Joe Romer, and they took it from there. "Joe and Deb have been superb co-ordinating (the contest) and I'm sure the students enjoyed it," said Kast.

The logo design became a class project for the 26 students. Romer and Kast sorted through the pile of entries and selected five finalists. Then, the food services staff voted for their favourite.

Watters and Wakutz will receive some free food coupons for winning. Kast also gave the whole class a free pizza lunch to reward them for their hard work. He hopes the new posters will be up by the end of this semester, but said they

will definitely be ready for the fall.

Watters said she got the idea for her design by thinking about the meaning of the words. The Z and the E of Coz-E form a three dimensional corner. The corner is also a similar shape to the college's crest, which gives it a more personal touch.

Wakutz said she did not plan her logo ahead of time. "I just designed the first thing that came in my head," she explained. She added she was surprised she won, because she was not an original finalist. After Romer gave Kast the finalists, Kast reviewed all of the entries and pulled Wakutz's from the pile.

Reyner said she is excited to have her students' work in the school.

Iraq reconstruction will be difficult

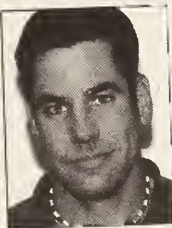
Now that the war is coming to an end, it is the job of the United States administration to put the country back together again. This may be more important and more difficult than the war itself.

The country is in a state of chaos. With no regime there is a political vacuum and essentially no law. The two major cities, Baghdad and Basra, are currently without running water or power. Widespread looting and chaos are rampant throughout the country, while revenge killings are occurring.

At the onset of the war, the Americans were bent on changing the regime in Iraq. The war was a chance to rid the country of a ruthless and cruel dictator.

The new centre of power would reflect the will of the Iraqi people and the principles of democracy and freedom. Bush has consistently said that it will be the Iraqis who will have the freedom to vote for whom they think should guide the country.

However, the U.S. has already started to lay the foundations of a temporary, overseeing administrative body to supervise the rebuilding of the country and its tattered political infrastructure. President George Bush and his administration have consistently said that this



Jeff Morley

Opinion

would only be a temporary institution. However, many predict that the rebuilding of the country will not take months, but maybe years.

The president and British Prime Minister Tony Blair have disagreed on the issue of reconstruction.

Blair would like to see further United Nations involvement in the rebuilding of Iraq. They believe the organization could add legitimacy to their efforts in the Arab country.

The UN has vast experience in re-establishing order, infrastructure and political machinery, while also maintaining it. The UN could use its many Arab delegates to facilitate progress in the country.

However, Secretary of State, Colin Powell, has said that UN aid is welcome, but little else. Powell would like to see America and Britain alone lead the reconstruction of the country.

Still, the United States is unsure exactly how to go about it. Iraq has

no electoral or political infrastructure, widespread chaos has plagued the country, and there is still dissent and distrust among the Iraqi people. Humanitarian aid is still only trickling in and many people have been uprooted and displaced by the war.

More problematic is the longer the United States stays in the country the more they will look like an occupational and colonial force.

Resentment of the occupational forces will not take long to grow if the conditions in Iraq are not improved quickly.

Other countries in the Middle-East have been watching the events unfold in Iraq closely, as America tries to rebuild the country in its own image. While the Iraqis may be cheering in the streets now that they have been liberated, it may only be a short time until their liberators are no longer welcome.

The United States must move quickly to repair the damage they have caused. With the United Nations' help, the rebuilding of Iraq would have some legitimacy and wouldn't serve the interests of the Americans so directly. The U.S. must make the rebuilding process an international one, with the help of the world community, in order to be entirely successful.

\$5,000 award up for grabs

By PETR CIHACEK

Did you know that you might be eligible to get \$5,000 through a new national in-course award?

The competition is fierce as only six Conestoga students have a chance to win the award. But if you are a full-time student with a 77 per cent average who is returning to school in September and who has never won a merit award before, you should give it a shot.

"It is a great opportunity," said Jancen Hoover of Conestoga's awards office. "We are allowed to move forward six applications from Conestoga students. We need all the applications by June 6."

An applicant must be a Canadian citizen or landed immigrant enrolled full time in an undergraduate program leading to a first degree diploma or certificate.

You can download the six-page application form, as well as detailed information on the awards

and criteria, at www.millennium-scholarships.ca/incourse.

Besides two copies of the application form, two letters of reference must be submitted to the Financial Aid and Students Awards Office in the Student Services building.

The national award was introduced by the Canada Millennium Scholarship Foundation as an extension of its Millennium Excellence Award Program.

"The awards recognize academic achievement, demonstrated leadership, commitment to innovation and community service," said Sheamus Murphy, the foundation's public affairs officer. "There will be up to 100 awards of \$5,000, each renewable for a second year, up to 200 awards of \$4,000, each also renewable for a second year, and up to 900 awards of \$4,000 each."

Altogether, \$4.9 million will be handed out through the 1,200 scholarships. Students are supposed to get their awards by September.

LETTER TO THE EDITOR

Canopy colour questioned

To the Editor:

The college should be proud to celebrate its No. 1 ranking in the KPI indicators for the fifth straight year. It is a reflection of innumerable good decisions by everyone involved with Conestoga.

However, can anyone tell me who selected the lime green colour for the canopy over E-wing's Door 6?

Ken Dawson

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CSI says year a success

BY JASON NOE

Despite the cancellation of the last pub night of the semester, Conestoga Students Incorporated (CSI) believes this year was an overwhelming success.

The bash was scheduled for April 4, but was cancelled because of a severe ice storm that swept across Ontario.

"We decided to cancel the event about 30 seconds after they informed us the college would be closed," said CSI events programmer Jody Andruszkiewicz.

"If the building is not going to be open, we can't exactly hold a pub night. The weather was so atrocious."

Andruszkiewicz explained the CSI spent an hour trying to figure out what they were going to do with all the arrangements they had made.

"The beer order was on the way when they decided to close the college," said Andruszkiewicz. "I caught him on the way and told him to turn around and go back, the weather was out of control."

The CSI thought about rescheduling the party, but had no alternative night to do so. They did not want to move it to a weekend or Friday night, because of a lack of students on campus at those times. Also, the remaining Thursday nights were already booked with the CBSA awards banquet in the Sanctuary, and exam week, which

is a quiet study period.

Andruszkiewicz feels this year was a success for the CSI and Conestoga students. He is already looking ahead, and is planning to make changes to next year's bashes in the Sanctuary.

"There are three things students can expect in the bar next year," said Andruszkiewicz. "We are going to redesign the bar this summer so the Sanctuary is a destination, not an afterthought starting in the fall."

This plan includes constructing a new bar where the old one sits now, installation of a new DJ booth for parties, and new lighting in the Sanctuary.

"The next thing we are going to do is offer more of a beer selection," said Andruszkiewicz. "Attentively, we have targeted Molson Canadian, Labatt Blue, Coors Light, Miller Genuine Draft, and we are still going to keep the Brick lager. We are going to price it so students can afford to drink in the Sanctuary bar."

Andruszkiewicz said that profits collected will be put back into the bar and student life at the college.

"The third big thing is that you are going to see a lot more variety in the events," he said. "We're only going to do four maybe five themed events next year. My one major failing this year was too many themed parties."

Andruszkiewicz believes the CSI is prepared to increase the number

of normal pub events, and only concentrate on theme parties at certain times throughout the year. Andruszkiewicz said the best themed event was the toga party in September, when the pub officially opened.

"We're attentively planning on keeping the toga, Halloween, Mardi Gras, and luau parties as our four themed events," said Andruszkiewicz. "We're only going to add, and where we went wrong this year, we're going to modify."

Andruszkiewicz further added the CSI was able to establish a culture of student life this year. In his three years being a student at the college, he said there was almost no student life.

"There were tons of students involved in getting student life started again back at Conestoga in the past one or two years. I'm proud to say I've been a part of that," said Andruszkiewicz.

He believes the CSI has finished a tremendous year. He thanked the students for all their support, because the bar could not have done as well without all their help.

"It's something you have to build on every year," said Andruszkiewicz.

"I'm really happy with the overall way the events ran this year. This was my first year as a full-time programmer. I knew there would be bumps."

Local woman promotes anti-hate message

By LESLEY LEACHMAN

The Women's Resource Group will be hosting an anti-violence and discrimination workshop as part of the Employees for Excellence and Education (EEE) conference at Conestoga College on June 11.

The speaker, Barbara Pressman, will be using experiential exercises and direct testimony of victims to help get her message across in her workshop.

Pressman believes these methods are more effective at promoting change than simply teaching facts.

Every year the Women's Resource Group sponsors a workshop for the EEE conference and this year they selected Pressman to be the speaker.

The group's chairperson, Joan Magazine, says she felt Pressman's workshop on anti-violence and discrimination

would be of interest to the faculty and staff who will be attending the EEE conference.

"It (is a topic that) is not just for women," she says. "But women are often the targets of discrimination and violence, even if it's unattended in the classroom."

"These things can be language that leaves them out of the picture or things that diminish the role they play."

Pressman is a local educator and has been involved in anti-prejudice activity for more than a decade. She also takes part in the Holocaust Education committee in Waterloo Region.

The EEE conference runs from June 10 to 13.

Pressman's workshop will run on June 11 from 8:30 a.m. until noon.

Those wishing to attend must sign-up in advance, as this workshop only has space for 40 participants.

Memorial nameplate honours LRC worker

By LESLEY LEACHMAN

Those who leave us will not be forgotten. The Women's Resource Group has certainly not forgotten a woman who was their liaison in the Learning Resource Centre (LRC).

Former LRC worker, Anne Earl, recently passed away from cancer. The Women's Resource Group announced that they plan to place a memorial nameplate inside a book as a thank you for all the work she did for them.

"She (Earl) had been away from the college for a while (because of her battle with cancer) and it wasn't made all that public to the rest of the (college) employees that she had died," says Barb Kraler, a member of the Women's Resource Group, at a meeting on April 8. "And I think the employees would see it as a gesture to all the work she did."

Earl helped the Women's Resource Group with purchasing books and finding resources.

"She was very nice to deal with. She was always so good with helping us find materials," says Kraler.

"She'd always tell me 'Oh, I saw something that was just right for you!'"

Also discussed at the group's meeting was the possibility of having a workshop for International Education students when they first come to Canada.

"We're (the college) getting a number of students that come from very sheltered backgrounds," says Women's Resource Group member Kim Radigan. "And then they come here and all of a sudden they are being thrown into social situations, and they come from somewhere where that is not normal."

"We hope to give them some education around what is appropriate behaviour in dating, what sexual harassment is, and those sorts of things."

Radigan says she made a few calls to see if any other organizations have developed something that helps deal with these issues.

Also at the meeting, the group discussed their sponsorship of a Women in Technology workshop during orientation week in August.

Welding students win awards

By JAMES K. DOYLE

Three Conestoga students have earned national awards for their skills and hard work.

Curtis Brown, Murray Geerlinks and Mike Willman were all recipients of the R.M. Gooderham bursary.

There are only 10 bursaries handed out annually, making this an outstanding achievement for Conestoga College. The Southern Alberta Institute of Technology was the only other school to have multiple winners.

Brown, Geerlinks and Willman are all in their final year of the

diploma-level welding engineering technology program at Conestoga's Guelph campus.

The bursaries are awarded based on achievement of academic excellence in welding-related studies, production of a 1,000-word essay on a topic related to the welding trade and a clear desire to pursue a career in the welding fabricating industry.

The bursary, worth \$2,000, is presented by the Gooderham Centre for Industrial Learning on behalf of the Canadian Welding Bureau.

The presentations were made on April 15.

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